

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-1303**

January 21, 2010

Carole R. Doris  
Chairman  
Metra Board of Directors  
547 W. Jackson Blvd.  
Chicago, IL 60661

Dear Chairman Doris:

I write to request that Metra implement a much-needed increase in weekday commuter rail service along the Heritage Corridor. I strongly encourage Metra to coordinate with Canadian National Railway (CN) – the line's right-of-way owner – to accomplish this important service enhancement. Given recent infrastructure upgrades to the line in 2007 that significantly improved efficiency and could facilitate additional trains, increased Metra service will provide more flexibility for current commuters, facilitate new ridership, and help meet the future needs of residents along the corridor.

As you know, Heritage Corridor service currently runs three weekday roundtrips from Joliet to Chicago Union Station, with stops in Lockport, Lemont, Willow Springs, and Summit, along CN's right-of-way. Although this Metra service has provided affordable and reliable weekday access to and from downtown Chicago, the conflict between Metra and freight traffic along the route has limited its schedule and frequency. Unfortunately, this has forced many local residents, especially in my congressional district, to drive downtown, utilize alternative Metra routes or other public transportation further from their homes, or even not consider employment and educational opportunities in the city.

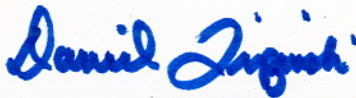
As Chicagoland's only member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I have worked to secure funding to untangle regional rail and road congestion and help Metra improve efficiency and boost service. This includes \$100 million I secured in 2005 for the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) rail modernization program. One set of improvements, completed in 2007 as a "pre-CREATE" project, modernized the Brighton Park junction which serves the Heritage Corridor and now allows trains to travel through the junction at more than 30 miles per hour if the intersection is clear of other train traffic. Prior to these enhancements, the 70 trains that passed through the junction each day were often forced to wait over 10 minutes for manual track clearance before proceeding.

Given the improved efficiency at the Brighton Park junction and the need for expanded service on the Heritage Corridor, I encourage Metra to coordinate with CN to increase weekday roundtrip service on this route. And as improvements continue to be

implemented over time on this rail line through CREATE and other projects, I urge Metra to work to further boost the frequency of service. Three roundtrip trains per weekday are simply not enough to meet the current and future needs of residents along this corridor.

Thank you for your consideration of my request. I look forward to continuing to work with you as we aim to increase, enhance, and expand commuter rail service in Northeastern Illinois.

Sincerely,



DANIEL LIPINSKI  
Member of Congress

cc: Claude Mongeau  
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